

FIRE FIGHTERS GUIDANCE NOTE # 6-11

ISSUE: RAPID INTERVENTION TEAMS (RESCUE)

The employer should provide written operational guidelines for establishing rapid intervention crews/teams of at least two firefighters to rescue firefighters in circumstances where there is the potential to become lost or trapped. The potential to become lost or trapped can occur at emergencies such as interior structural fires, confined space rescues, high angle rescues etc.

The Rapid Intervention Teams (R.I.T.) can either be:

- On-scene firefighters designated and dedicated to rapid intervention crews, or;
- On-scene firefighters performing other functions, but ready to deploy as rapid intervention teams if necessary.

Operational Procedures developed by the employer should ensure the following key elements are implemented:

- Rapid intervention teams shall be fully equipped with the appropriate protective clothing, portable radios, protective equipment, SCBA, and any specialized equipment that may be needed considering the specifics of the operation.
- Based on resources at hand it may be necessary that emergency rescue activities take place before a R.I.T. has assembled. Such instances should be reported in writing to the Fire Chief and the circumstances forwarded to the local Joint Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative to be reviewed.
- If a R.I.T. is to be assembled from on-scene firefighters performing other functions, a number of additional key elements must be addressed in the Operational Procedure such as:
 - Personnel must know that they have been designated as the R.I.T.
 - They cannot be performing functions that require the use of their S.C.B.A. air supply.
 - The Incident Commander or other Sector Officers cannot be designated as the R.I.T.

- R.I.T's shall be implemented as part of the Incident Command and Accountability systems.
- If a firefighter becomes lost, a Personnel Accountability Report (PAR) must be conducted immediately, and the R.I.T must be alerted.
- Once a R.I.T. is deployed another R.I.T. team should be implemented for their protection if resources allow.
- A R.I.T. is not required for every pair/crew making entry into a hazardous area, but more than one R.I.T. may be required if resources are available depending on the size and geographical layout of the incident.